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ABSTRACT

A middle school principal with 17 years of experience as a classroom teacher implemented a practicum designed to develop positive, long-lasting social skills among elementary school students in the intermediate grades. The primary goal of the intervention was to decrease the number of instances in which students used verbal or physical aggression to solve conflicts in informal and unsupervised situations. A second aim was to provide students with strategies for solving conflicts peacefully. The principal and intermediate grade teachers selected the Creative Conflict Resolution for Kids program for implementation. Implementation involved: (1) in-service training for teachers who, in turn, trained students; (2) monitoring of the progress of students in applying skills learned; (3) assistance to teachers who monitored students; and (4) collection and review of practicum evaluation data. Data indicated that outcomes of the intervention were positive. The number of students referred to the principal because of aggressive behavior decreased, as did the number of verbal conflicts on the playground. Students requested opportunities to discuss conflicts with peers. Close relationships between teachers and students developed as a result of classroom discussions of conflict resolution. Related materials including the survey instrument are appended. (RH)

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SUPPLEMENTING ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE WITH CONFLICT RESOLUTION TO DEVELOP SOCIAL SKILLS AT THE INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

BY

KATHLEEN J. PARKHURST

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Supplementing Assertive Discipline with Conflict Resolution to Develop Social Skills at the Intermediate Level

by

Kathleen J. Parkhurst

Cluster XXIII

A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program
in Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1988

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

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Approved:

7.4.88
Date of Final Approval of Report

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ABSTRACT

Supplementing Assertive Discipline with Conflict Resolution to Develop Social Skills at the Intermediate Level. Parkhurst, Kathleen J., 1988: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood.
Descriptors: Classroom Discipline/Moral Development/Peace Curriculum/Self Esteem/Conflict Resolution/Social Development/Assertive Discipline/Democratic Environment

This practicum was designed to develop positive, long-lasting social skills in students at the intermediate grade level. The primary goal was to decrease the number of instances in which students use verbal/physical aggression to solve conflict in informal and unsupervised situations. A second aim was to provide students with strategies to solve their conflicts peacefully.

The writer and intermediate teachers reviewed several programs and selected Creative Conflict Resolution for Kids. The writer conducted an inservice training for teachers who in turn trained students; monitored the progress of students in applying the skills learned; assisted teachers in monitoring student application of the program; collected and reviewed evaluation data.

The result of the practicum was positive. Analysis of the data revealed that there was a significant decrease in the number of students referred to the Principal because of aggressive behavior. The number of verbal conflicts on the playground decreased. Students requested opportunities to discuss conflicts with peers. Teachers and students developed closer relationships with each other as a result of the classroom discussions on conflict resolution.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The community in which the practicum took place is a rural town in the rapidly growing sunbelt section of southwestern United States. This community currently enjoys the small town amenities which a population of approximately 4,000 people offers. The tranquillity of this prized area located at approximately 5,000 feet above sea level is being threatened by five separate developers whose combined building projects are predicted to yield a moderate estimate of 65,000 people within the next ten years. The effects of this growth are already visible in the increased enrollment in the school.

Traditionally, this community was closely linked with a nearby copper mining town with the majority of the residents working at the mines. Since that industry has declined recently and there is no other employment available, the residents are forced to travel a distance to work. The lack of employment opportunities has not hampered the growth of this town since its climate, clean air, plush vegetation and mountains are a great attraction. The area is also noted for its artistic community, offering live theatre, summer stock, jewelry

crafters and world renowned artists. Conveniently situated between the two major cities in the state, it is definitely an oasis in the desert. It is about 40 miles northeast of a city which houses the states largest university, and is one of the major tourist centers in the country. Recently, a major technological company built a factory within a thirty minute drive of this community, adding to the population growth.

The socioeconomic composition of the community is generally middle class. For years, the majority of its residents were retired couples but recent studies show the population shifting to younger couples with families. Approximately 40% of the population is second generation Mexican-American, with no black or Native American population to speak of.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The school in which the practicum took place is an elementary school district with an enrollment of 535 students, kindergarten through eighth grade. Its 250 high school students are tuitioned out to nearby high school districts. After ten years of stable enrollment, the school is experiencing a growth of approximately 50 students a year. This number is expected to increase considerably within the next two to three years. Like

the community, the student population is 40% Hispanic, 0% black, 0% Native American and 60% Anglo American.

The district is comprised of two campuses. The Primary School (K-3) is located at one end of town on the original school site. The first school building, a southwestern adobe structure built in 1938, still houses the second grades. Because of its age and the expanded population, the Primary campus is considered substandard and inadequate. The Middle School and District Office are newer buildings located at the opposite end of town. The recent growth has motivated the Governing Board to hold a bond election to build an additional ten classrooms to meet the needs of the growing student population.

The school is part of the state public education system with an elected state board of education as its guardian. The county department of education acts as a liaison for the local districts and the state. The County Superintendent of Curriculum works closely with the schools, especially the small rural districts. The local governing board, however, is autonomous in forming policies and procedures for the district in compliance with state regulations. Because the school is the sole avenue for entertainment and social gatherings, the public is supportive of school programs and functions.

The philosophy of the district encompasses the

belief that every child has the right to the opportunity for development to his/her fullest potential. To reach this end, the staff established goals which will result in the development of basic skills, provide for individual needs and abilities, and produce effective, socially adapted citizens. The staff of thirty-six certified and twenty classified personnel has a high level of dedication. Because of its size, the teachers and staff provide a personal, family environment for children. Parents have easy access to teachers, administrators and support staff. Parental involvement in the school is evidenced by the thirty-two volunteer parents who work at the Primary School on a weekly basis. In order to maintain a personal relationship with students, class size at the Junior High level (7-8) is between 20 and 25. Although students change classes, teachers are assigned as homeroom moderators to each group of students. Students are to look to this teacher for guidance, direction and personal needs.

The administration consists of a teaching principal (half-time) at the Primary School, a full-time principal at the Middle School and a Superintendent. All three members of the administrative team are currently doctoral candidates. The faculty is comprised of 23 classroom teachers, three special education resource teachers, one special education cross-

categorical self-contained classroom teacher, a music teacher, an art teacher, two physical education teachers, a psychologist, a remedial reading instructor, a part-time speech therapist, a librarian and an instructor in English as a Second Language. The total instructional staff is made up of seven males and 29 females. Of this number, four are Mexican-American and 32 are Anglo-American. All teachers hold certification and degrees appropriate for their assignment. Thirteen hold masters degrees or higher, and one has a doctorate. Twenty teachers are continuing teachers with a range of service between 4 and 23 years. Sixteen members have taught in the district for 3 years or less.

Academic class assignments are based on teacher recommendations with a concerted effort to maintain thoroughly heterogeneous ability groups from K-8th grade. The basic skills of reading, english, spelling, mathematics, as well as science, social studies, physical education, music and art are taught in all grades K-8. The Middle School offers an extra-curricular program in which students may participate in the after-school sports program or become a member of a club such as the Computer Club, Home Economics Club, Young Astronauts Club, Chorus, Science Club, School Newspaper, Student Council, Drama/Dance Club, and Library Club.

Special programs offered to meet the needs of the

learning disabled students are resource rooms, with a strong emphasis on mainstreaming students. Severely learning disabled and emotionally handicapped students are served in a self-contained classroom. These students, however, are mainstreamed in all areas except the basic skills classes. Approximately 30% of the student population receive assistance through pull-out programs either resource, remedial reading, English as a second language or speech therapy. The students have traditionally scored among the highest ranked schools in the county in the annual state mandated testing program.

The writer is approaching twenty-eight years in education; 17 years as a classroom teacher at the elementary level and 11 years as an elementary school principal. The last four years have been served as Middle School Principal at the site where the practicum will be conducted. The writer holds an undergraduate degree in education, a master's degree in elementary education with a minor in child psychology and a master's degree in theology. She is certified by the Department of Education as an elementary school teacher K-8, an elementary school principal and a reading specialist.

The writer spent 19 years in education on the east coast both as a classroom teacher and principal. Her present position is her first held in the southwest.

She began her assignment as a part-time principal of the Primary campus, teaching Chapter I Reading half day. The second year, she served as full-time principal of the Primary School. A year later, she became principal of the Middle School where she is beginning her third year in this position. Along with the principalship, the writer is the district curriculum director, the inservice coordinator, director of special education and co-director of special programs. These include Talented and Gifted, Chapter I and English as a Second Language. Over the years she has served on various committees, the most current of which is the district Career Ladder Program.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Descsription

In 1980, the governing board adopted Assertive Discipline as the district-wide discipline program. Assertive Discipline is a systematic blueprint designed to guide teachers in dealing with children's misbehavior (Canter, 1982). The program was developed by Lee Canter, a child psychologist and Madelene Canter, a special education teacher. The plan enables teachers to determine what behaviors they want their students to change, how they can assertively communicate their wants to their students and what the consequences will be if students do, or do not, comply. It is based on the premise that teachers have the right to teach and children have the right to learn. It is an organized plan showing teachers how to take charge in the classroom in a firm and positive manner through the use of positive and negative reinforcement. The program was nationally acclaimed by educators across the country as a successful means of maintaining discipline in the classroom.

The district readily adopted such a program based on the perceived inability of the staff to control

students particularly at the Middle School level. The poor discipline may have been attributed to frequent changes in administration at the Middle School. The Middle School Principal at the time introduced the board and staff to Lee Canter's program "Assertive Discipline". A thorough study of its philosophy and basic tenants was done by a committee comprised of teachers, parents, board members and administrators. Once the program was adopted, teachers received inservice training in the program and implementation began. Assertive Discipline was used in all grades K-9 (the district discontinued the 9th grade in 1985) in the classrooms, on the playground and in the cafeteria. The system of rewards and consequences was put in place. Initially, success was seen from the program since discipline referrals declined, and teachers claimed to have greater control of students in the classroom.

In 1984, a new Middle School Principal was hired. During this year the Middle School discipline deteriorated. Although Assertive Discipline was enforced, discipline referrals to the principal averaged 60 referrals a day. Parents began to complain that movies were shown indiscriminately as rewards for good behavior. The reward system was ineffective; detention rooms were filled daily and the three in-school suspension rooms were in such demand that student

assignment to the suspension rooms were backlogged up to three weeks. The same students were suspended from school repeatedly. The school was not a safe place for children. There was no protection from acts of violence from other students. Parents began to take their complaints to the school board. The governing board requested a committee of parents, teachers and administrators be formed to study the discipline problem at the Middle School. The study resulted in a renewed determination to follow Assertive Discipline more strictly. This action brought about an even greater increase in discipline referrals to the principal, more detentions and less learning taking place. The teachers became more forceful and were viewed as the enemy by the students.

In 1985 the writer became the Middle School Principal. By this time, students who began in the district as Kindergarteners were in fourth grade. The staff was anxious to bring about reform in the school. The first step was to motivate students to conform to classroom and campus rules in an effort to maintain order and manage behavior. This was accomplished by providing and enforcing a consistent, fair structure to the daily schedule. Fighting, use of obscenities and extreme rudeness to staff were treated with serious consequences issued by the Principal. Afterschool

and Saturday work programs were initiated. Immediately, students began to display socialized behavior in the classroom. Order began to replace chaos. Classrooms were again places of learning. At the same time, the middle school teachers began to share their concerns about the students' social behavior on the playground. Although Assertive Discipline was used in the classroom, it was not enforced in its strict sense on the playground. Once students were put in a social context with informal supervision, aggressive behavior evidenced in name calling, fist fights and alienation of certain students. Informal discussions with teachers began to reveal that many of the tenents of Assertive Discipline were no longer effective. It was obvious the old rewards of movies, popcorn parties, treat days, etc. and the consequences of detention and suspension were not effective in deterring inappropriate social behavior.

The middle school teachers once again received inservice training in Assertive Discipline. Nine sessions of films and discussions were held at the beginning of both the 1985 and 1986 school year. Weekly staff meetings were held to discuss progress in the social behavior of the students. These formal meetings revealed that when teachers took the time to talk with students about the problem at hand rather than assign them a negative consequence, the misbehavior diminished.

The writer spent two to three hours daily with seventh and eighth grade students who were chronic discipline problems. Severe offenses warranted serious consequences, while minor problems were opportunities for communication with the students. By the middle of the 1987 school year, discipline referrals for the 120 junior high students diminished to approximately 10 a month. It was noted however, that the 180 intermediate students were averaging five referrals to the principal a week. Being sent to the principal was the most severe discipline in a four-step process; 1.) name on the board as a warning, 2.) a check after the name and 15 minutes detention, 3.) a second check after the name and 45 minutes afterschool detention and 4.) a fourth check and sent to the principal. Upon reflection, it was realized that the reoccurring problem was poor social behavior on the playground, in the cafeteria and in other social settings. Many hours of informal discussions with teachers at both the primary and middle school levels revealed that Assertive Discipline was an effective program at the primary level, but its success began to erode at the intermediate level.

It is during this period of development (ages 6-12) that a child passes from heteronomous thinking to autonomous thinking regarding moral situations (Piaget, 1932). During the heteronomous stage, the child

perceives rules as external laws which are sacred because they have been laid down by adults. Rules against damaging property, lying, stealing, are not procedures established for smooth functioning of the group, but are seen as arbitrary rules, like "laws of the gods" which one must not transgress. Later, during the autonomous stage, rules are seen to be the outcome of a free decision and worthy of respect to the measure that they have enlisted mutual consent. Rules are no longer obeyed because they are handed down by a superior, but are seen as requirements for group relationships. During the last ages of the Concrete Operations Period, heteronomy starts to give way to autonomy. In order for the child to make this transition, unilateral respect must be replaced with mutual respect (Piaget, 1932).

As children mature and become more socially oriented, it is essential that they learn to express their needs and rights in order to have them met and at the same time respect the needs and rights of others. A good school discipline program is one in which children learn to conform to the external expectations of teachers and peers in order to provide a healthy and harmonious learning environment for all. As students mature and external conformity becomes routine, external controls can be released and students begin to exhibit

conformity to expected behavior based on a sense of responsibility to the school society. This control is self selected, based on inner discipline resulting from self esteem and respect for others. The school environment is one in which students can work unthreatened and at peace.

In conclusion, the problem addressed by this practicum was that the students at the intermediate grade level had poor social skills as evidenced by an increase in undesirable social behavior by students in the fourth through sixth grades.

Problem Documentation

In order to document the problem stated in the previous section, a survey (Appendix A) of all 36 members of the instructional staff was conducted. The survey addressed Assertive Discipline; how it was used by each teacher, and what each considered the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The teachers were asked to respond to the survey items as they pertain to their personal application of the program. Although the problem was most severe at the intermediate grade level, teachers of all levels were surveyed in order to obtain a total perspective of the program.

Table 1.

General Statements about Assertive Discipline

Response Category: 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree
3 = agree somewhat 4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

Survey Item		Response Category 1	2	3	4	5
1. Is used in classroom	P.S.:	0	0	2	3	5
	Others:	0	6	11	1	1
2. Is effective	P.S.:	0	0	4	4	2
	Others:	0	4	12	3	0
9. Behavior continues after removal of award	P.S.:	0	2	5	2	1
	Others:	0	3	11	5	0
12. Has positive effect on playground	P.S.:	0	5	4	0	1
	Others:	1	7	9	2	0
16. Is strictly followed	P.S.:	0	2	3	4	1
	Others:	9	6	3	1	0
17. Has long-range effects	P.S.:	0	1	6	3	0
	Others:	2	10	5	2	0

Table 2.

Number of Referrals

Response Category: 1 = 0-2 2 = 1-3 3 = 2-5
4 = 3-6 5=higher

Survey Item		Response Category 1	2	3	4	5
18. Daily names on board	P.S.:	2	2	4	2	0
	Others:	11	4	4	0	0
19. Daily checks after name	P.S.:	3	5	2	0	0
	Others:	15	3	1	0	0
20. Sent to principal weekly	P.S.:	8	2	0	0	0
	Others:	19	0	0	0	0

Table 3.

Effective Consequences

Survey Item		Response category 1	2	3	4	5
3. Name on board	P.S.:	0	0	4	6	0
	Others:	1	3	13	2	0
4. Check after name	P.S.:	0	1	2	7	0
	Others:	1	3	11	4	0
5. Sent to principal	P.S.:	0	1	2	4	2
	Others:	1	3	7	9	0
6. Recess detention	P.S.:	0	2	3	3	2
	Others:	2	1	10	5	1
7. Afterschool detention	P.S.:	0	0	4	3	3
	Others:	3	0	10	3	3
8. Tangible class reward	P.S.:	0	1	4	1	4
	Others:	0	1	11	6	1
10. Letters to parents	P.S.:	0	0	2	6	2
	Others:	0	1	8	8	2
11. Including parents	P.S.:	0	1	5	2	2
	Others:	0	2	7	8	2

Table 4.

Most Common Discipline Problems

Survey Item		Response Category 1	2	3	4	5
13. Poor study habits	P.S.:	4	2	2	1	1
	Others:	0	5	9	3	2
14. Playground behavior	P.S.:	0	1	3	2	4
	Others:	1	1	4	9	4
15. Classroom behavior	P.S.:	0	2	3	2	3
	Others:	1	10	6	1	1

Each of the major aspects of Assertive Discipline were surveyed; putting the child's name on the board, putting a check after the name, use of detention, contacting parents, referral to principal, positive rewards, negative consequences. Of the 36 teachers questioned, 29 responded. The teachers were asked to indicate the department in which they worked; Primary, Intermediate, Junior High, or Special Services - Special Education, Music, Physical Education, Art, etc. The results (Tables 1-4) indicated a difference in philosophy between the Primary Staff and the Intermediate-Junior High and Support Service Teachers (Others) regarding Assertive Discipline. While all 10 of the Primary School Teachers use Assertive Discipline to a great degree, 17 out of 19 of the others (majority group) use it somewhat. Sixteen of the majority group believe the program is an effective deterrent to undesirable social classroom behavior in contrast to all of the 10 Primary Teachers believing it is effective. Regarding the typical Assertive Discipline techniques of putting a child's name on the board as a warning, then receiving a check after his/her name if the undesired behavior continues, 17 of the majority group indicated putting the child's name on the board is not a deterrent to undesirable behavior in contrast to 10 of the Primary Staff believing the opposite. Two points of agreement

between the groups were that sending the child to the principal and group rewards are effective deterrents to unacceptable behavior.

The survey indicated there was a problem with social behavior of students both on the playground and in the classroom. The problem of disruptions in the classroom related to poor social skills appeared to be equally serious at both levels. The Assertive Discipline Program was strictly adhered to by 8 of the 10 Primary Staff while 18 out of 19 of the majority group did not follow Canter's program in its pure form. This philosophy was also displayed in the fact that 17 of the majority group did not believe Assertive Discipline had a long-range positive effect on student behavior in the school, while approximately 9 of the Primary Staff did believe the program had some long-lasting effects on the students' social behavior.

Causative Analysis

There were several factors causing the Assertive Discipline program to become less effective. Most of these factors were aligned with and rooted in developmental psychology. The first cause, however, was found in the realm of the practical; it had been around too long in the district. It appeared the initial

purpose of Assertive Discipline had served the students and staff well. Order was recovered and control of the school was in the hands of the staff and administration. The missing link, however, was self-control on the part of the students. After five years, the gimmicks of the reward system were no longer needed to maintain a peaceful environment. The second cause was that as the children reach the age of approximately ten years, they begin to see rules as the product of mutual consent, rather than as a code of laws handed down by authority. After years of having the teacher fix the rules, students wished to participate in the rule making. A third cause was that as children mature, the emphasis from retributive justice declines and distributive justice takes over. As mutual respect and solidarity with a group become more influential in the child's life, group punishment is considered unfair. Life is no longer black and white; a gray-zone has entered into the child's analysis of events. Authoritarian teachers who give little latitude for individual differences and circumstances in applying the rule are considered unfair and uncaring. It is not uncommon that students who have such a teacher, exhibit perfect control out of fear and then release their tension on the playground or cafeteria in socially inappropriate behavior.

A fourth reason for a decline in classroom

discipline and a continuation of problems in student's social behavior was that the emphasis of discipline had been on conformity to the rule without teaching students social skills which they could apply in any situation. Teachers lacked a repertoire of lessons which would instruct students how to cope with disagreement, to defend ones rights nonviolently, express ones needs in a calm, rational manner, perceive an individual problem from another's point of view or in relation to the group. Students at the intermediate age level were ready for universal principles of justice, reciprocity, equality of human rights and the dignity of human beings as individuals rather than concrete moral rules to be followed.

Along with an absence of skills in group dynamics, teachers lacked the time needed to bring problems to the surface and discuss them in depth. Such a process takes a great deal of time away from the basic instructional program, often creating tension in the teacher because "content" was not being taught. In addition, problems often crossed classrooms and grade levels, causing communication barriers between students and teachers as well. The logistics of finding the root of a problem, hearing the point of view of all involved, coming to a conclusion about the situation, are time consuming, and interrupt the time spent on instruction. Teachers

were reluctant to give the time necessary to such an approach to problem solving with their students. Although teachers believed communication is necessary in order to solve conflict, the schedule allowed little time or privacy for students to talk with each other. Consequences were issued with little dialogue regarding how to prevent the same negative situation from being repeated.

Finally, it was concluded that students at the intermediate level had not been allowed to participate in setting policy for their school or classroom. Even though the staff understood that children at this level are aware of the larger society, know the importance of order and rules and are very eager to be involved in decision making, rules were made by the staff and administration and enforced from the top down. The school did not provide a democratic environment for the students. Classroom rules in particular were not arrived at by the new class each year. Rules were generally carried from year to year and applied to all groups, giving little consideration to differences. It was also perceived that the structure of the school campus was not clear to the students. Clearly defined boundaries, procedures for passing from one building to another, where ranks are to be formed, etc. were unclear and not enforced by all teachers with equal importance.

The result was confusion and conflict between students and teachers as well as among students themselves.

The Related Literature

A review of related literature indicates that there are a variety of approaches toward classroom and school discipline programs which achieve lasting success. The early works of Piaget (1932), Kohlberg (1969, 1970), Fowler (1976, 1980) Durkheim (1961) and Rawls (1973) have laid the foundation for research in the area of moral and social development. Kohlberg, Levine and Hewer (1983) found that the moral expectations of the environment effect differences in behavior. For example, after one year of a program incorporating moral dilemmas in the curriculum, collective norms of trust and responsibility developed in a school to the point that each member of the school community pledged to contribute 25 cents to repay 10 dollars stolen from a student's purse. There were no further episodes of stealing in the school for the next three years and students generally agreed that neither they nor their peers engaged in any stealing during this period. It was found, however, that the moral environment established in the school community did not govern the moral actions outside the school community.

This same study also cites a comparison of two high schools and the normative expectations of drugs in those schools. In the first school a norm against coming to school high on drugs was never developed in stage or phase and student behavior was accordingly lax. Students believed that coming to school high was acceptable as long as the teachers did not detect it. In the second school, a great deal of work was done to develop community valuing and collective norms. At this school, the drug norm did develop to a high phase, leading first to confession of the use of drugs, then to peer pressure to confess, and finally, to the absence of abuse of drugs either at school or on school retreats. Kohlberg, et. al. conclude that moral atmosphere in the form of collective norms and a sense of community can be a very strong force in determining moral behavior, holding individual moral judgment stage at a constant level. However, it appears that the influence of moral atmosphere may be limited to the situational and institutional context of the group.

Moral Development

Leming (1986) claims the research done on schools where students are not allowed to experience meaningful participation in classroom or school life suggests that the resultant student attitudes, values and behaviors

are undesirable. Leming sites the result of a study which found that fifth through eighth grade students become alienated when they were denied meaningful participation in school and classroom life. Leming found that over 70 % of the studies conducted in schools where students were involved in moral-dilemma discussion classes the moral-dilemma class exceeded the control group in moral stage upward change. The extent of stage change varied from study to study, but typically involved upward movement between one-sixth and one-half of a stage. With early adolescents most of the subjects were at stage two or three. The upward movement as a result of moral-dilemma interventions, then, generally represented a shift away from defining moral questions in terms of one's self-interest and toward a more social and conventional perspective where one begins to use social norms to define one's moral responsibilities.

Power, Clark and Kohlberg (1986) found the most well-intentioned schools, particularly those wishing to emphasize tight discipline, typically induct students into a "we" versus "they" mentality. This mentality regards illicit behavior as "moves" in a competitive game. After a 12 year study of schools with an approach toward a democratic community as opposed to an authoritarian government, their research showed that

members of these schools have come a long way in addressing the problems of stealing, cheating, racial conflict, alcohol, marijuana use and truancy.

Schaps, Eric, Solomon, Daniel and Watson (1986) instituted the Child Development Project which holds that academic and character education are viewed as equally important goals for schools, each deserving its own time and attention in the school day. The project, involving over 3,000 students Grades K-3 was designed to establish a long-lasting and significant effect on children's prosocial development. The aim was to refine, increase and coordinate five types of activities that most teachers or parents already do to some degree; cooperative activities, helping and sharing activities, setting positive examples, promoting social understanding and positive discipline. Children in the experimental group were more likely to play collaboratively, share, take turns, were more supportive and cohesive and less irritable in difficult and frustrating interpersonal communication tasks than their peers in the control group. The project is a 6 year study with the achievement data to be collected as the students complete third grade.

Rosenzweig (1980) believes the role of the educator ought to be that of a supportive but

questioning guide who encourages the articulation and examination of students' own reasoning about ethical issues and facilitate exposure to higher stages of reasoning. Rosenzweig gives four educational interventions which have been used in classrooms with high school students. The general thrust of the evidence thus far is positive; it appears that educational intervention can effect the process of cognitive moral development in students, but both theoretical and practical aspects of developmental moral education reflect problems and weaknesses which will require the continued attention and concerted efforts of researchers and practitioners. Rosenzweig's work with teachers has led to the conclusion that any attempt to implement developmental moral education asks a great deal of the classroom teacher. Most pilot programs involve the efforts of highly trained and experienced researchers, professors, and graduate students in psychology. While many teachers may be interested in the implications of developmental moral education, few have the time or the opportunity to acquire the necessary background to implement it in a meaningful way.

Arbuthnot and Faust (1981) hold that from available evidence, it can be estimated that between 30

and 60 % of individuals, depending on the particular group, will be unlikely to benefit at any one time from moral education programs that do not consider Piaget's stages of moral development. A few students and educators will develop negative attitudes as a result of moral education "failures". Moral education "failures" result from lack of readiness and not from some fault of the educator or student.

Gilligan (1982) has found a marked difference between young boys and girls in their interpretation of moral dilemmas in that each sees a different moral problem in the dilemma. In a case given, the boy saw a conflict between life and property that can be resolved by logical deduction, while the girl saw a fracture in human relationship that must be mended. Asking different questions that arise from different conceptions of the moral domain, the 11 year olds arrive at answers that fundamentally diverge. The arrangement of their answers as successive stages on a scale of increasing moral maturity calibrated by the logic of the boy's response misses the different truth revealed in the judgment of the girl. The two children, both highly intelligent and perceptive about life, though in different ways, display different modes of moral understanding and different ways of thinking about

conflict and choice.

Democratic Environment

Peters (1981) states that if an institution embodies an attitude to rules that are characteristic of an earlier stage of development, teachers who attempt to encourage a more developed attitude have an uphill task; for in their attempts at cognitive stimulation they are working against the deadening directives of the institution. Not every school which upholds an ideal of autonomy should abolish its punishment and examination systems and introduce a democratic system since this ignores the implications to be drawn from the Piaget-Kohlberg theory. According to this theory, children have to move from seeing rules as connected with punishments and rewards to seeing them as ways of maintaining a gang-given or authoritatively ordained rule structure before they can adopt a more autonomous attitude toward them. The criticism of this system is that the emphasis on a second-level type of regulation was overdone and that third-level type of morality was encouraged only for the few who were singled out for positions of eminence.

Rosen (1980) compares Dewey and Kohlberg's position on building a democratic environment in the

schools. He believes that Dewey's view is echoed in Kohlberg's position that if the school is to prepare one for properly living in a democratic, social and moral manner upon graduation, then it must recreate the conditions necessary for such a life. The school cannot reasonably expect to subject children and adolescents to 12 years of authoritarian rule in a morally sterile context and then set them free to lead their lives as committed adults participating in the democratic process. The proper role of the school is to create that milieu which will stimulate cognitive and moral development as far along the universal stage hierarchy as possible for each student. If moral education is not explicit, then values will be implicit in the child's school experience. Rosen also agrees with Piaget's research when he claims that one's attitude toward rules constitutes the essence of morality. There exists a premoral stage which is basically asocial. One example of Rosen's theory put into practice is Glasser's (1965) model in which the teacher holds regular class meetings to discuss general conduct and other matters. Such a model involving students in the solutions to their own problems has had greater long-lasting results.

According to Rosen, Piaget and Kohlberg agree that there are vast differences in the way younger

children perceive bad actions and punishment from the way 13 year olds perceive them. The use of punishment during the younger years is advocated while as children increase in age, punishment should decrease. They also agree that there is a tendency on the part of younger children to think that harmful events will automatically and naturally follow bad actions, but older children do not anticipate such teleological events. Finally, Rosen holds that the valuing of truth evolves as the child becomes socialized. As long as a relation of unilateral respect is maintained, the child has no opportunity to hold peer-level discussions and thus is unable to discover the destructive aspect of lying.

Jackson, and Merrill (1984) conducted a series of studies in which attempts were made to construct a valid and reliable method for observing children's stealing responses. Resist-yield data and moral judgment data were collected from 134 children aged 7-16 years. A technique embodying two forms, a "did do" (actual) and "should do" (ought) stealing dilemmas. A series of highly significant differences within the groups on the "did do" and "should do" versions were noted, together with significant differences between "delinquent" and "normal" populations.

Stumpf and Holman (1985) applied a number of

positive behavior modification strategies to reduce the level of disruptive classroom behavior and to program for generalization of treatment effects across time and settings. Groups of eight disruptive students aged 10-12 years were randomly assigned to either a control, the experimenter-selected reinforcement or the self-selected reinforcement group. Results show that both reinforcement groups drastically reduced disruptive behavior. Those who had the experimenter select the reinforcement did better in generalizing treatment in the training setting as well as following program termination.

Self Esteem

Brennan (1985) found that higher levels of student participation lead to higher levels of self-esteem. Rutter's (1981) findings indicate that not only are students influenced by the way they are treated as individuals, but there is also a group influence resulting from the ethos of the school as a social institution. He saw a definite causal relationship between school process and student achievement.

Rusnak (1984) examined the relationship between listening skill development and cognitive moral development. Pre-post measures of listening and cognitive moral development show significant differences

in moral development for those students instructed in listening skill development. Fifer (1986) found that in classrooms where teachers generally remain immobile, problems tend to increase in number and frequency in a triangular fashion that directly correspond to the distance of the student from the teacher, indicating that increased teacher mobility can reduce the frequency of inappropriate behavior and enhance student-teacher interaction. Gerler, Kinney and Anderson (1985) did a study which showed that students who received group counseling or individual treatment by a counselor positively changed their own perceptions of classroom behavior.

Kohlberg (1980) believes that children with extensive peer-group participation advance considerably more quickly through his stages of moral judgment than do children who are isolated from participation and that the ultimate issue of participation is one of participation in the structure and decisions of the school itself.

In summary, the writer was unable to find research on the implementation and success rate of Canter's Assertive Discipline program. There is research regarding a variety of school discipline programs based on democratic government, student participation,

discussion and moral development. These programs appear to have long lasting effects on student behavior and school environment. There is evidence of a wealth of research on democratic school environment and moral development at the high school level, but little at the intermediate level. The majority of research has been done with male students and little inclusion of the female perspective. While it is generally agreed that children at the primary level (K-3) are typically at the first level of moral development where authority exists for them and is to be obeyed, it appears as children pass into the second level of moral development, an authoritarian type of discipline becomes less effective. The research also shows that school environment, pupil-teacher relationships and peer relations all have an effect on student discipline.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Statement of General Goals

The ultimate goal of all education is to provide children with the skills necessary to become functioning and contributing members of a democratic society. To accomplish this goal, schools must teach children how to get along with others in a peaceful manner. Since all values are taught by the approximate age of ten, the goal of this practicum was to develop positive, long-lasting social skills in students at the intermediate grade level.

Behavioral Expectations

The responses to items 14 and 15 of the teacher survey demonstrated that teachers believed students exhibited the greatest problem with interpersonal relationships in informal settings in the classroom and on the school campus. Nine of the 10 primary teachers and 17 of the 19 other teachers indicated the most common discipline problem in the classroom was due to noncompliance to classroom rules related to social skills. Eight out of 10 primary teachers and 12 out of 19 of the others showed that the

most common disicipline problem they dealt with was related to disorderly conduct on the playground. It was believed that students needed to be provided with the necessary skills to maintain positive social relationships with their peers. As a result, the following behavioral objectives were chosen:

1. Over a three month period, nine teachers in grades 4 through 6 will have supplemented Assertive Discipline with strategies designed to promote social behavior in students evidenced by an 80% decline in student aggressive behavior measured by a teacher survey at the end of the implementation period.

2. Over a three month period, the number of students with names on the board will be between 0-2 per day at the intermediate level as determined by the results of a teacher survey.

3. Over a three month period, students will resolve conflict situations in the classroom peacefully as measured by a checklist of student behaviors observed by the teacher.

4. Over a three month period, students will exhibit prosocial behavior on the playground and in the cafeteria as measured by recorded observation of teachers before and after the implementation period.

Evaluation Instruments

The first objective was to be measured by a comparison of the number of students referred to the principal for disciplinary action because of antisocial, aggressive behavior before and after the implementation period. This measurement was chosen because it was considered quick and concrete. A study of the responses to item #20 of the teacher survey of Assertive Discipline (Appendix A) before and after the implementation period would give this data. The second objective was also to be measured by the teacher survey (Appendix A). This survey was the same one used to determine the existence of the problem. This time responses to Items 14, 15, 17, 18 and 19 would show whether or not there was a positive change in student social behavior (See Tables 1-4). The results of the survey at the end of the three month period compared with those at the beginning of the implementation period would provide that data. The third objective was to be measured by a checklist of behaviors observed by the

teacher in the classroom (Appendix B). A checklist was selected to evaluate this objective because it would allow the teacher to quickly record positive behaviors observed during the day. It also would allow teachers to determine who needed reinforcement in problem solving skills and who was becoming adept at using these skills.

The fourth and final objective was to be measured by teacher observation as recorded on a comment sheet (Appendix C) filled out by the teachers on playground and cafeteria duty each day. This method of evaluation was selected because the teachers believed the observation sheet would not only record whether or not progress was being made, but would also identify those areas which needed additional reinforcement in conflict resolution. A study of the record kept on the checklist throughout the implementation period would show whether or not teachers observed less aggressive behavior in the students interactions with each other, indicating fewer verbal arguments, fewer physical fights, and a more peaceful environment overall.

In order to have a record of all events related to the development of social skills in students, teachers were to be asked to keep of log to be submitted at the end of the three month practicum period. This log was to indicate what worked or did not work for each teacher, significant information pertaining to student

behavior, student reaction to certain instances and any other pertinent information which might be helpful. If a teacher felt at any time the program was not achieving its end, s/he was to notify the writer who would assist the teacher in either improving the techniques of the program or finding alternatives which would work. The writer was to document the teacher assistance conferences as they occur.

THE END RESULT	EVALUATION TOOL	STANDARD OF ACHIEVEMENT
1. Students will exhibit social behavior.	Teacher survey	80% decline in aggressive behavior.
2. Number of student names on board due to anti-social behavior decreased.	Teacher survey.	80% decline compared with previous year.
3. Students solve problems peacefully in classroom.	Teacher observation.	80% increase in ability of students to solve problems peacefully.
4. Students have applied acquired prosocial skills.	Teacher observation.	80% decline in numbers of conflicts on playground.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

As stated in the review of the literature, despite the fact that thousands of schools across the nation have adopted Assertive Discipline as their district discipline program, very little has been written regarding its success. For the district in which this practicum took place, the Assertive Discipline model provided little direction for teachers to become problem solvers, give individual guidance to students in a counseling situation or in assisting students in altering their behavior in a positive manner.

The review of the literature did show that there is a great deal written about programs designed to promote prosocial behavior in students of all ages, particularly the early adolescent. The most common and successful were those based on sound developmental psychology, incorporating social, moral and intellectual theories of development.

There was no question that Canter is correct when he claims that the teacher needs to keep children from disrupting the learning process. Other models, however, are available that enforce limits effectively, do a better job of teaching children to live in a democracy,

and help learning to be a more positive experience (Gartrell, 1987).

Kohlberg's (1983) use of moral dilemmas in the curriculum to treat certain social problems has proven very successful. The goal of this practicum was to provide students with the skills necessary to solve conflict in any situation. The research on Kohlberg's work demonstrates that the moral environment established in the school community did not carry over outside the school community. The lack of integration of skills into social situations outside the classroom made Kohlberg's model inappropriate as a solution to the problem. Another drawback in using Kohlberg's model was that it was most successful when conducted by trained psychologists. In a small district in which there is only one certified psychologist, the social dilemma model was impractical. The research also showed that where schools provided a democratic rather than autocratic government, students exhibited more positive social behavior (Leming, 1986 and Power, Clark & Kohlberg, 1986).

The students in the practicum school had a Student Council for many years. The Council had been ineffective due to lack of proper leadership both from the student ranks and from the staff who acted as moderators. The writer had attempted unsuccessfully to

motivate the officers to become involved in government decisions. The officers lacked the ability to demonstrate the meaning of shared responsibility and the leadership necessary to inspire the student body to follow them. The goal of the writer was to allow the current Student Council officers to attend a Leadership Camp and the Student Council Convention in order to meet students who offer successful leadership in their schools.

Peer panels or peer moderators were also used quite successfully in schools. These panels were comprised of elected or appointed members of the student body who acted as both judge and advisor to students with problems. Such a model was most desirable but again impractical due to improper leadership. It appeared that more time was needed for the staff to model open communication and peaceful problem solving at the classroom level before it could occur schoolwide.

One of the most serious problems facing America's youth is that of drugs and alcohol. In response to this problem, many commercial programs have been published to assist schools in creating a drug-free society. The district in which the practicum took place had recently adopted such a program for students in grades four through eight. "Life Positive" (Alba, Colello, 1985) is an affective educational approach to preventing drug

abuse in youth. It aims to instill in children a heightened sense of reliance upon their own internal resources for feeling good about themselves and comfortable in relating to their environment. The primary goal of the program is to strengthen the child's self-esteem and personal identity by enhancing the child's ability to communicate effectively and to develop a solid core of life coping skills. It would appear that this program would clearly result in developing prosocial behavior in the students. It failed to meet the needs of the students since in order to be effective, the sessions are to be conducted in small groups of ten for forty-five minute sessions. The logistics of conducting such a program with limited staff would have resulted in eliminating the intermediate students from the the sessions until the spring of the year; too late to remediate the problem.

There are also many commercial programs aimed at building self-esteem in students. Definitely, lack of self worth is perhaps the single most important factor influencing prosocial behavior. Such programs, however, did not go far enough in providing assistance with the problem. The solution used should contain components which build self-esteem in students, as well as strategies for problem solving, decision making, critical thinking and communication.

Another problem confronting students in America is that of fear of nuclear war. There have been a variety of curricula developed to educate children for peace (Mallela, 1985). The essential elements of these curricula include creating a safe environment, giving factual background, promoting critical thinking as well as creative thinking and teaching non-violent conflict resolution. These elements of peace education and how they can be woven into other areas of the curriculum depend upon the style of the teacher, curriculum organization present in the school and the nature of the learners. Definitely, some of the elements of such a curriculum are helpful in promoting positive social behavior in students, especially nonviolent conflict resolution.

Description of Selected Solution

From the research on training it was apparent to the writer that when teachers plan and implement prosocial curriculum experiences, young children behave in more considerate, less aggressive ways, consider others' point of view and display greater empathy as well as reason more maturely about social problems (Kim, Stevens, 1987). The Glasser (1965) model proposes the teacher speak individually to the child who has a problem rather than use public correction by use of a

name on the board. Glasser also recommends frequent class meetings to openly discuss problems. The Ginott (1971) model proposes teachers use specific communication skills to resolve classroom or social problems of the group. Assertive Discipline may afford the teacher quick control, but programs which incorporate in depth, time-consuming communication with students provide long lasting results.

It was for these reasons that the program written by Schmidt and Friedman (1987), was selected as a solution to the problem of supplementing Assertive Discipline to develop social skills in students at the intermediate grade level. The writer believed that the strategies introduced to the students incorporated all of the concepts promoted by Glasser and Ginott in practical, experiential and interesting activities. The recommended skills are; 1.) **Sharpening perceptions.** This strategy helps students see how conflict can arise from people seeing things differently. 2.) **Fair fighting.** To help them apply game rules to daily behavior, students are taught how to make rules for fair fighting, i.e.; identify the problem, focus on the problem, attack the problem, not the person, listen with an open mind, treat the other person's feelings with respect, and take responsibility for your actions. 3.) **Communicating directly.** This strategy involves teaching

students how to express their needs, rights and feelings in a way that's direct, honest and nonthreatening. 4.) **Mediation.** Mediation helps the students realize that tug-of-war tactics don't help solve problems and that they must resolve the conflict together.

The techniques provided by Schmidt and Friedman are incorporated in a curriculum called "Creative Conflict Solving for Kids". This resource appeared to have all of the characteristics needed to teach students prosocial skills. By being actively involved in activities such as brainstorming, role playing, problem solving, and decision making, students learn the skills of creative communication, listening, fighting fair, critical thinking and cooperation. Many school districts have used the curriculum and found it successful, particularly at the middle school level. It was found to be not only a valuable classroom tool in resolving conflict, but has lead to a more peaceful playground, home and community for many who have used the program. Through the curriculum students develop positive interpersonal skills, respect human differences, understand the causes of conflict, practice conflict resolution strategies, learn ways to handle frustration and anger and explore conflict as a positive force for change within the democratic process.

A video tape showing the civil rights movement of

the 1960's introduces students to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the dynamics of non violence. A comprehensive teacher's guide with six lessons and reproducible student pages is provided along with colorful posters providing students with guidelines to help them "fight back" effectively and nonviolently. After reviewing many programs to assist in solving the problem of antisocial behavior in the classroom and playground, the staff believed "Creative Conflict Solving for Kids" used as a supplement to Assertive Discipline would provide the students with the skills needed to develop prosocial behaviors. The curriculum provided in the kit would provide the teachers with the information needed to develop these habits in the students.

Report of Action Taken

The solution used in this practicum involved the teachers and students of grades four, five and six along with two special education teachers. The first phase of the solution was to provide teachers with the skills necessary to help students solve conflicts peacefully. Nine teachers received inservice training in "Conflict Resolution for Kids"; two at the fourth grade level, three at the fifth grade level and two at the sixth

grade level and two special education teachers who service students at the intermediate level. The writer provided four hours of inservice training for the teachers in two two-hour sessions. The video tape was viewed and discussed as well as each lesson of the "Conflict Resolution for Kids" booklet. The inservice leader demonstrated the strategies and concepts of each lesson using activities invloving the teachers as students.

The second phase of the problem solving process then began. Over a period of four weeks, a total of 191 students; 83 girls and 108 boys were trained in conflict resolution skills. The video and overhead transparencies of each lesson were available for classroom use. The classroom aides reproduced the pages in the resource book for the teachers. The program was implemented in the fourth, fifth and sixth grade classrooms for a period of three months. Strategies for solving conflicts peacefully were given to students by their homeroom teacher. In some cases these skills were imparted as specific lessons set apart from other areas of the curriculum and in other cases they were incorporated into social studies and health at other times. Once the strategies were given to the students, conflicts which arose in the classroom or on the playground were often resolved by the class in a group

process. The final phase of the solution was the observation phase. During this period, teachers observed students in informal situations to determine if they had acquired the skills needed to solve problems peacefully and were able to integrate them into their daily living.

In addition to providing students with skills for solving conflict peacefully, the staff incorporated the concept of peace in as many areas of the curriculum as possible, especially the language arts. Students were required to write essays on "What Peace Means to Me," "How I Helped Create Peace," and "How I Can be a Friend." The use of books to promote discussion on peace were incorporated both as reading for students and for teachers to read to the students. There are a number of gentle stories available that evoke a feeling of love of neighbor and peace. The reference list published by Fassler and Janis (Fassler & Janis, 1985) giving a list of stories that oppose violence, are of a peaceful and soothing nature, show solving problems peaceably, affirm similarities and differences among individuals and value cultural variety are an example of such books. These books provided a framework for discussion and identification for students.

The Physical Education teachers introduced games which encouraged feelings of friendship (Kaplan,

1986). In such games there are no losers; everyone wins or hugging is incorporated as opposed to hitting. Songs about peace and friendship were taught by the music instructor. Social Studies lessons were centered around how people can make the world a better place, how we can help each other. Social Studies also lent itself to a discussion of heroes. Are heroic people always strong? Is it heroic to hit first? To hit back? To hit someone weaker than you even if they hit you first? Is it heroic to stop a fight? To prevent one? Do heroic people always get in the newspaper or become famous? What is the most heroic action you can think of? What would a heroic person never do? These were just some of the questions which were presented in such a lesson (Snow, Mark & Burt, 1985). In Mathematics, graphs were kept in the intermediate corridor showing the number of students who had not been involved in fighting or negative social behavior each day in each class. At the end of the week a total intermediate department graph was made showing the cummulative number of students who have exhibited prosocial behavior.

In addition, teachers accepted their role as social planners by arranging the social and physical environment in ways which promoted social learning. The routine of the day was clearly established in

order to avoid confusion and conflict. All teachers consistently enforced the routine. In establishing the structure, a more democratic process was used providing students an opportunity to participate. Classroom and playground rules were established with the students. Reasons for specific adult-made rules were explained. Students also had input in establishing consequences for any infraction of the rule. Finally a program to help build self-esteem was incorporated. A "Student of the Week" was voted from each class. This students' picture was posted in the cafeteria with an explanation of why s/he was elected. Mottos or slogans pertaining to building a positive self-image were announced each day from the public address system. These mottos were discussed by the class to develop understanding. It was believed that the supplemental program to promote a nonviolent, positive environment accompanied by the "Creative Conflict Solving for Kids" program would diminish negative social behavior in the students.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

Supplementing Assertive Discipline with conflict resolution skills and strategies at the intermediate grade level resulted in a decrease in aggressive behavior on the playground and in the classroom. Conflict Resolution for Kids promoted a new level of communication for students and fostered deeper relationships as well as an increase in the number of friendships between students.

Objectives one and two were measured by a teacher survey of Assertive Discipline (Appendix A). This survey was also conducted to determine the effectiveness of Assertive Discipline in the district and to determine the existence of the probelm. Since the practicum dealt specificly with the intermediate level, the Primary School teachers were not surveyed the second time. Because the support staff interacts with the intermediate students almost daily in music, physical education, art, and special education in formal situations as well as informally on the playground and cafeteria, they were included with the middle school staff in the second staff survey. Items 14, 15, 17, 18,

19 and 20 were most directly related to the practicum problem-solving process. Table five shows a comparison of survey results for these items before and after the implementation period.

Table 5.

Comparison of Results

Response Category:	1 = strongly disagree 3 = agree somewhat 5 = strongly agree		2 = disagree 4 = agree				
Survey Item		Response category 1	2	3	4	5
14. Playground behavior	Before:	1	1	4	9	4
	After:	4	4	8	2	1
15. Classroom behavior	Before:	0	2	3	2	3
	After:	4	3	10	1	1
17. Has long-range effects	Before:	2	10	5	2	0
	After:	12	4	3	0	0

Response Category:	1 = 0-2 4 = 3-6		2 = 1-3 5 = higher			3 = 2-5
18. Daily names on board	Before:	11	4	4	0	0
	After:	18	1	0	0	0
19. Daily checks after name	Before:	15	3	1	0	0
	After:	18	1	0	0	0
20. Sent to principal weekly	Before:	19	0	0	0	0
	After:	19	0	0	0	0

Objective One was measured by a teacher survey. Although item #20, the weekly average number of students

who were sent to the Principal, showed no apparent change after the three month implementation period, the number of referrals dropped drastically. When the survey was given the previous year, the average number of referrals a week was two per teacher, ranking within the 0-2 range. Ater the implementation of conflict resolution for kids, the average number of referrals a week per teacher was down to zero. The principal handled approximatelty two discipline problems a month from the intermediate level; over an 80% decrease.

Objective Two was measured by the same survey. This time, however, the daily average number of students who had their name on the board, was addressed by survey item 18. After the conflict resolution for kids program, the daily average number of names on the board decreased by over 80% with the majority of teachers averaging only two per week.

Objective Three was measured by the review of a teacher observation checklist (Appendix B), describing the behaviors observed in the classroom. The teachers listed the names of each child in the class, then placed a check under the behavior observed by the child. During the implementation period, the behaviors checked most frequently were "Avoided Name Calling" and "Resolved Conflict". Teachers observed that those who were most often involved in verbally or physically aggressive

conflicts showed the greatest progress. It appeared, however, that avoidance of name calling and listening were the two behaviors still used most often by students in conflict situations. Teachers observed that most conflicts arose because students did not listen to each other, then began name calling. Once they applied the conflict resolution strategy of identifying the conflict, peaceful resolution soon followed. A room in the administration building was provided for students who desired privacy in talking out problems. This room was in great demand. Rules for the use of the room were given by the principal. The door of the time-out room had a window in it so that students could be supervised from outside. No more than two students were allowed to talk together, as much time as needed was allowed, if peaceful resolution could not be arrived at, an adult was to be included. The use of the time-out room always resulted in resolution of the conflict. Often, students would request to use the room in order to talk out a concern in order to prevent conflict from arising.

Objective Four was measured by the results of a second observation checklist (Appendix C). This list recorded the number of times certain behaviors were observed on the playground during the period of one week. At the end of the week, the checklist was given to the principal for review. Over a three month period

verbal conflicts on the playground decreased from approximately eight times a day within a 30 minute period, to two times a day. Acts of physical aggression declined from two daily to one every two weeks. Students telling on others went from twelve to two times a day. The number of times conflicts were resolved peacefully increased to two daily from one every two weeks. Those students who continued to have problems of antisocial behavior on the playground were those who had serious emotional problems.

Conclusions

All four objectives were met well within the goals set. Overall, students at the fifth and sixth grade level appeared to have the greatest success in applying the strategies of conflict resolution to their everyday lives. The mathematics project graphing the number of students who were not involved in a conflict situation each day showed the sixth grade students were most successful, followed by the fifth grade. Developmentally, many of the fourth grade students were not able to see and understand the point of view of another, one of the essential aspects of conflict resolution. Objectives one and two were the easiest to measure since they were determined by concrete data.

One of the problems faced by the writer was that the project was too extensive for a three month practicum. The course on conflict resolution strategies was quite extensive and would have been more effective had it been conducted throughout the entire year. Students were instructed for three weeks then observed for a two month period. The writer has every intention of continuing the program during the entire school year in the future.

Another problem was the amount of time needed to help students resolve conflict. Teachers commented that once they began to relate to the objectives of the lessons in the conflict resolution classes, students had so much to share that an entire day could have been devoted to each topic. Teachers found it was difficult to come to closure on a particular topic because students had so much to say. Initially, each day after lunch recess, teachers spent time in group sessions helping individuals solve problems which arose on the playground. For many teachers, this was the first time a formal context in which to discuss feelings and attitudes with their students was provided. Teachers claimed that as a result of their discussions stronger bonds developed between themselves and their students. Time taken away from formal curriculum and instruction became a problem for teachers. It soon became apparent

that there was a need for someone outside of the classroom teacher to be appointed as a group leader for those students with special needs.

A third problem was providing supervision for those students who requested privacy to talk. The only room available was located in another building. Often the school secretary was the only person available to supervise students. It was determined that a program for junior high student monitors was needed in order to relieve teachers and other school personnel of the burden of supervision. Such a program would also solidify the skills the junior high students learned during their intermediate years.

In conclusion, the writer believes Assertive Discipline may be an appropriate short-term solution to providing external control in schools where discipline does not exist but in the long-run, by itself, is not enough to maintain prosocial behavior. Self control, positive interpersonal skills, respect for human differences, understanding of the causes of conflict, and knowledge of conflict resolution strategies motivate students to act from a self imposed inner control. Assertive Discipline by itself does not provide students with the inner motivation needed to cause a change of heart. Although the initial investment of a staff in a program such as Conflict Resolution for Kids is above

all time consuming, the investment does pay off. Once students learn ways to handle frustration and anger and explore conflict as a positive force for change within the democratic process, the need for external controls will no longer be necessary.

Recommendations

The writer has four specific recommendations based on the results of this practicum. First, teachers be trained in conflict resolution strategies or skills similar in nature in order to help students solve their problems peacefully. Secondly, teachers provide an environment in which peace and peacemakers are promoted through all areas of the curriculum and set up as models. Thirdly, students are introduced to conflict resolution strategies as early as possible and be given opportunity to resolve conflicts peacefully by being provided with privacy, time and when necessary someone older who can act as a mediator. Finally, students who are peacemakers, be given recognition and praise.

Dissemination

The results of this practicum project were disseminated to three groups. First, they were shared with the intermediate staff at a staff meeting at the

close of the school year. Secondly, a report of the results was given in a talk by the writer at a meeting of the newly formed Parent Teacher Association. Thirdly, a copy of the practicum report was given to the District Superintendent of Schools and to the Governing Board members. Fourthly, the practicum report will be submitted to educational journals for publication.

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TEACHER SURVEY: ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE

DEPARTMENT: _____
(Primary, Intermediate, Junior High, Special)

INSTRUCTIONS: Please circle your response to the following statements. Respond to these statements based on your analysis of students with chronic behavioral problems as well as the entire class.

5 = strongly agree
4 = agree
3 = agree somewhat
2 = disagree
1 = strongly disagree

(1)	Assertive Discipline is used in my classroom.	5	4	3	2	1
(2)	Assertive Discipline is an effective deterrent to undesirable social behavior in my classroom.	5	4	3	2	1
(3)	Putting a child's name on the board terminates undesirable classroom behavior.	5	4	3	2	1
(4)	Putting a check after a child's name on the board terminates undesirable classroom behavior.	5	4	3	2	1
(5)	Being sent to the Principal terminates the child's undesirable classroom behavior.	5	4	3	2	1
(6)	Detention during recess is an effective deterrent to undesirable classroom behavior.	5	4	3	2	1

(7)	Afterschool detention is an effective deterrent to undesirable classroom behavior.	5	4	3	2	1
(8)	A tangible class/group reward motivates students with chronic behavior problems to correct their behavior.	5	4	3	2	1
(9)	When rewards are removed students continue to comply with classroom rules.	5	4	3	2	1
(10)	Positive letters to parents are effective motivators for students to eliminate undesirable classroom behavior.	5	4	3	2	1
(11)	Having parents aware of the discipline program is effective in deterring undesirable classroom behavior.	5	4	3	2	1
(12)	Assertive Discipline has a positive effect on student behavior on the playground.	5	4	3	2	1
(13)	The most common discipline problem is due to non-compliance to classroom rules related to study habits.	5	4	3	2	1
(14)	The most common discipline problem in my classroom is due to classroom rules related to social skills.	5	4	3	2	1
(15)	The most common discipline problem I deal with is related to disorderly conduct on the playground.	5	4	3	2	1
(16)	Assertive Discipline as promoted by Lee Canter is strictly adhered to in my classroom.	5	4	3	2	1
(17)	Assertive Discipline has had a long-range positive effect on student behavior in my school.	5	4	3	2	1

(18) The daily average number of students who have their name on the board falls within the following range:

0-2 1-3 2-5 3-6 higher

(19) The daily average number of students who receive checks after their names falls within the following range:

0-2 1-3 2-5 3-6 higher

(20) The weekly average number of students who are sent to the Principal falls within the following range:

0-2 1-3 2-5 3-6 higher

APPENDIX B

TEACHER OBSERVATION CHECKLIST: CLASSROOM

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

	Student Name	Identified Conflict	Avoided Name Calling	Listened	Resolved Conflict
1.	A	/	/	/	/
2.	B				
3.	C				
4.	D	/		/	/
5.	E	//		//	//
6.	F				
7.	G				
8.	H	/	/	/	/
9.	I	//	//	//	//
10.	J	/		/	/
11.	K				
12.	L				
13.	M				
14.	N				
15.	O	/	/	/	/
16.	P	////	////	////	////
17.	Q				
18.	R				
19.	S		/		/
20.	T	/		/	/
21.					

Period of February 1 to March 1

APPENDIX C

TEACHER OBSERVATION CHECKLIST: PLAYGROUND

PLAYGROUND OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

As you fulfill your responsibilities supervising children on the playground, please indicate the number of times you observe the behaviors described on this checklist. Pass this form on to the next teacher on duty. The teacher who fills it out on Friday is to forward the weekly checklist to the office after it is completed.

Week of February 22 to February 26

	Verbal Conflicts	Acts of Physical Aggression	Student Tell on Others	Conflict Resolved Peacefully
MONDAY:	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
TUESDAY:	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
WEDNESDAY:	3	-0-	3	3
THURSDAY:	1	1	2	4
FRIDAY:	3	2	3	4